

(Washington, DC)— Today Congressman Luis Gutierrez and Congresswoman Gwen Moore offered an amendment to H.R. 3997, the Financial Data Protection Act, during a hearing of the House Financial Services Committee which would allow state governments to help enforce laws that protect consumers from identity theft. In particular, the amendment would ensure that State Attorneys General would be able to enforce new laws to protect consumers when a business experiences a security breach and inadvertently releases or misplaces their customers' sensitive financial personal information.

The Gutierrez-Moore amendment would allow state governments, through the office of the state's Attorney General, to protect consumers' confidential financial data by investigating any instance of a security breach by a business. It would further give states the power to prosecute violators who fail to protect and notify their customers of a security breach in time to prevent identity theft.

"The federal government's ability to investigate and prosecute data security breaches nationwide is restricted considering all of the priorities and responsibilities our bank regulators are focusing on at any given time," Congresswoman Moore said. "It only makes sense to allow state governments to use their resources and initiative as well to protect their own residents closer to home."

Without this amendment, consumers all over the country would have to rely solely on the federal government to enforce the amended bill. H.R. 3997, which would strengthen the standards by which businesses are required to protect a customer's sensitive data, does not currently allow state governments to enforce the bill alongside the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

The Financial Services Committee, on which Congresswoman Moore serves, will vote on the amendment to H.R. 3997, the Financial Data Protection Act, later today.

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